



## EPA REGION 10 RTOC

### Regional Tribal Operations Committee

Curyung Tribal Council, PO BOX 216 Dillingham, AK 99576

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## TOPICS FORM

Meeting Date:

To better assist you with your questions and concerns  
please fill out this form with each issue you wish to discuss.

All forms are due 1 week (7 days) prior to the meeting.

Name: Gerald Anelon Sr.

Tribe: Village of Iliamna

Email: [gerald.anelon@iliamnavc.org](mailto:gerald.anelon@iliamnavc.org)

Topic Title: Climate Change:

**Description:** Elders are concerned about the fish that return to Iliamna Lake and also the berries and no snow and ice this year which will affect the level of the Iliamna lake and streams.

**Concern:** The weather has been affecting our subsistence hunting due to lack of snow and ice, berries growing in the summer, the fish smolt that were in the streams last year. There are many concerns without the snow that waters the land to bring back the yearly supply of fruit that we pick from the land.

**Requested Action:** to allow the tribes to be more active in the subsistence management due to climate change, better tracking of the weather for our area, the fish that come each year also needs to be tracked due to the warmer weather since we are the biggest spawning area for the Bristol bay. These are only a few that are associated with our climate change there is electricity, ground freezing, etc.

## EPA Response:

- Thank you for sharing your elder's knowledge and observations. Those are an important contribution to our understanding of climate change.
- I understand the challenges your community is dealing with adapting to the effects from a changing climate.
- Alaska is on the front lines in the battle with climate change.
- I understand that communities like yours are dealing with changes in temperature, precipitation, ocean chemistry, thawing permafrost, and loss of sea ice that threatens your lands, resources such as berries and fish, ceremonial and burial sites, and cultural practices that you have relied on since time immemorial.
- We are working hard to reduce the emissions of the harmful carbon pollution that is contributing to the changing climate.
- While we continue to try and reduce the emissions of carbon, we understand the need to start working with you and other communities to make your communities more resilient from the changing climate.
- Many Tribes are asking how they can begin to document climate impacts in their region.
- There are a growing number of federal programs that are working on this issue, often in partnership with tribal governments.
- In Region 10, while I understand GAP funds are needed for many critical needs, many Tribes are beginning to use the GAP program to respond to climate change.
  - They are using their GAP programs to gather baseline environmental information to better understand impacts in their traditional homelands.
  - The 2013 GAP guidance describes how tribes can develop climate educational program, perform vulnerability assessments and prepare climate adaptation plans. For example,
    - "Activities related to establishing environmental protection programs not administered by EPA, but that are consistent with those provisions of law for which Congress has given EPA authority, are allowable. For example a tribe could use GAP funds to develop a climate change adaptation plan." (GAP guidance, section 2, page 4).
    - C.3.19 Tribe has established community outreach/education programs, including air quality advisory system (e.g., indoor air quality, radon, diesel emissions reduction, burn barrels, wood smoke, anti-idling, greenhouse gas and ozone-depleting substance reduction, **climate change**, and radiation hazards).
    - C.3.20 Tribe has established intergovernmental partnerships with federal, state, local, and tribal governments to address air quality issues, including **climate change**, and radiation hazards (e.g., memoranda of understanding, interagency agreements).
- There are limits, since GAP is an environmental program, Tribes cannot undertake resource management activities, such as fish counts or harvest management. However, EPA programs can work with Tribes to help keep the environment healthy, so the well-being of plants and animals is protected.

- We would be happy to explore ideas on how the IGAP funds could be used in your community to develop plans for adapting to climate change.
- In addition, the Department of Interior has made available \$10 million over the past two years to help tribal communities adapt to climate change.
- Last year, 22 Native Alaska Villages were awarded grants.
- This year, proposals for projects were due April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015. We have not heard back yet the results.
- In regard to your question about tracking the weather, while EPA is not directly involved with tracking weather, there are several Federal and State agencies that are trying to improve our ability to predict weather.
- The challenge now, and in the future, is that the climate is changing and it is hard to project how it will impact your resources.
- In terms of tracking fish migration, this is also a challenge, but we are working hard to make sure the fish runs that you rely on will continue.
- If you have any specific questions about climate change I encourage you to work with Mike Cox or Michelle Davis of my staff.